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Dirksen Says Senate GOP Backs Johnson

Associated Press

Sen. Everett M. Dirksen (R-Ill.) said yesterday that Senate Republicans are going to continue to "uphold the hands of the President" in Viet-Nam.

Dirksen, the Senate Republican Leader, made the prediction to reporters after Rep. Melvin R. Laird (R-Wis.) said "we may be dangerously close to ending any Republican support" of present U.S. policy in Southeast Asia.

Laird, chairman of the House Republican Conference, said the possibility exists "because the American people do not know how far the Administration is prepared to go with large-scale use of ground forces in order to save face in Viet-Nam."

Dirksen said that so far as Senate Republicans are concerned, he does not see wavering in support of the President's course.

"We are going to uphold the President's hands," he said. "What else could you do in a situation of this kind?"

Dirksen said he is confident that a majority of Americans are backing Mr. Johnson's actions in the intensified warfare against the Viet Cong. He said he does not believe "teach-in" criticisms of policies reflect any substantial opposition.

Johnson and Fulbright Discuss Major Issues

United Press International

President Johnson discussed Viet-Nam, the Dominican Re-

public, the foreign aid bill and the United Nations situation yesterday with a frequent critic, Chairman J. William Fulbright of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The White House said it was one of the periodic foreign policy meetings that the President holds with the Arkansas Democrat.

Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey later joined the President and Fulbright for part of the discussion, then left for Chicago to take part in ceremonies honoring the Gemini astronauts.

The White House said Mr. Johnson later discussed the Dominican situation with Thomas Mann, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, and McGeorge Bundy, top White House foreign policy adviser.

Press secretary George E. Reedy said the White House would not comment on the proposed Senate Foreign Relations Committee investigation of the Dominican affair.